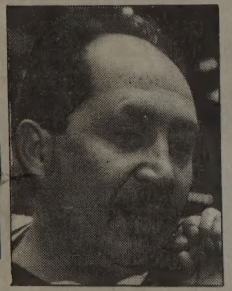
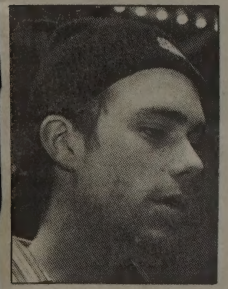
CITY

AMENDMENT 2: THE BACKLASH



"This protest stuff is a bunch of baloney. They're not going to make me change my mind with all the boycott, hate stuff. I don't think many people will pay attention to that talk — just get tired of it. I voted yes, and I would do it again."

— Arnold Quintana, 47, self-employed carpet layer, Capulin



"Both sides are going way overboard. The campaign was all about hate. I know this town, and they are so uptight about people who are different. Will Perkins and those guys just played that up for their own cause."

— Evan Swank, 20, UCCS student, Colorado Springs

Outrage over Amendment 2 doesn't faze Springs voters

Supporters respond to 'blackmail' tactics

By **Louis Aguilar**/Gazette Telegraph

El Paso County voters, who led the charge for passage of Amendment 2, are anything but intimidated by the nationwide backlash against the amendment, according to the results of an informal Gazette Telegraph survey.

More than two-thirds of the 350-plus callers who jammed a GT Amendment 2 hotline this week were steadfast in their support for the amendment, which bars laws prohibiting discrimination against gays based on sexual preference. They're fed up with the flak and disgusted that their vote wasn't the final word.

Interviews with people on the streets of Colorado Springs confirmed the point. Even cabbies at the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport are tired of being in the eye of the Amendment 2 storm.

"Two days ago, some guy says he's from Philly. He gets in and he says 'Hey, do they really hate queers here?' I thought I'd heard it all, but that was new," said an eight-year veteran driver who didn't want to be named. "I don't like the amendment, but to have some big city chump crap over my town. . . . I just drove."

Two-thirds of voters in Colorado Springs approved the amendment (compared with 53 percent statewide). Since then, they've heard their city called "the epicenter of hate" by gays and their supporters. And they've seen

See **AMENDMENT 2**/B4

■ Callers sound off on Amendment 2/**B4**
■ Streisand reiterates support for boycott/**B5**

...rleg

Associated Press

DENVER — A 4-year-old Romanian girl underwent her third surgical operation in 13 months to correct a rare birth defect that deformed her left leg and made it shorter than her right leg.

While she was still in her mother's womb in Romania, strong, fibrous bands of tissue grew around Christina Mutrit's left leg, right foot and left wrist. The bands strangled circulation to the extremities, and left her with nerve damage, fused fingers and toes, swollen feet and a congenitally shortened left leg.

Doctors at Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center on Friday deliberately broke the lower portion of Christina's left leg, and attached a cage-like device known as an Ilizarov frame to the bone segments.

The cage will stretch the segments apart, allowing new, straight bone to fill the gap in four to six months.

Judging by her previous convalescence periods, Christina's rehabilitation after Friday's five-hour procedure is expected to be brief and active, doctors said.

"You can't keep Christina down," said her American host, Phoebe Albert of Denver. "A week after her clubfoot surgery she was in a walking cast. She's not one to roll over and whimper."

Albert found Christina in a crowded Bucharest orphanage in 1991. Her parents had abandoned her there.

Romanian doctors were planning to amputate her leg. But the Denver-based Americans for Romanian Assistance charity negotiated the nation's first "humanitarian parole" so she could be treated in Denver.

Meanwhile, Christina's American sponsor continues to seek her legal adoption. The girl has been enrolled in day care and has visited Disneyland and Hawaii.

Associated Press

DENVER — A group proposing an aquatic life park in Colorado has settled on the city and county of Denver as the site for the $50 million project, but the specific site hasn't yet been announced.

Colorado's Ocean Journey is planning for an opening in early 1996 for the park, which had been proposed for either Denver, Littleton or Broomfield. The group announced Saturday it will build the park in Denver. The two sites under consideration are Stapleton International Airport, which will close in the fall of 1993, and the Central Platte Valley.

The group, together with contractor Hensel Phelps Construction Co., which has been chosen to build the park, will determine which of the two sites best fits the design needs of the project.

"This project is a very exciting part of the long-term vision of the City and County of Denver," said Mayor Wellington Webb.

The park is designed to "bring together the best features from aquatic attractions around the world," according to a press release issued Saturday. "Animals and plants will live in realistic environments that echo their natural habitats."

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Amendment 2/County voters speak out

From B1

their vote picked apart in a national debate — the subject of a boycott, a lawsuit, daily newspaper headlines, national television talk shows and denouncements by Hollywood stars.

"Why in hell do we even bother to vote if these special interests and some of our politicians stab us in the back?" asked Joel Haswell, 38, of Colorado Springs. "Homosexuality is filthy and disgusting and I don't want that pushed on me."

But even in metro Colorado Springs — usually a quiet, conservative town — the debate continues to rage.

"For the first time in my life I'm ashamed of the state in which I live," said caller Steve Virden of Monument. "Why is it that so many people in the state feel it necessary to deny the rights of a minority? What are people afraid of?"

Frank Wendallman, who is a temporary office worker, said he "almost expects" to be told not to talk about the amendment whenever he arrives in a new office. "I've worked three different places since (the election). Two of them said there was a ban because it causes people to talk too long."

At the heart of the argument in this city are strong beliefs and two words: special rights. Nearly everyone who told the GT they voted for the amendment repeated that as the reason.

"I've had gay friends before. They're nice people," said Theresa Lopez, 32, of Fountain. "But faggots shouldn't get jobs just because of what they are. That's the kind of special rights they wanted."

Like many others, she didn't think the amendment took away any tools gays have to fight discrimination, even though it repealed Denver, Boulder and Aspen laws banning discrimination against homosexuals in housing and employment.

Amendment author Colorado for Family Values used the "special privileges" label extensively during the campaign, but the actual amendment does not include those words. The National Legal Foundation, a Virginia-based group started by fundamentalist minister Pat Robertson, advised Colorado for Family Values in a June 1991 letter that the phrase would make a good campaign motto but might cause legal ramifications if included in the amendment itself.

"The language of the amendment should prohibit homosexuals from claiming any rights regarding employment, education, housing or status," the National Legal Foundation attorney wrote.

Critics have charged that those tactics confused voters. Many callers in Colorado Springs, however, begged to differ.

"I did know what I was voting for on Amendment 2, and I voted for what I thought to be in the best interest of the people of Colorado," said Vincent Johnson of Colorado Springs. "It seems to me several other people voted the same way. Outside monies, lobbies, celebrities' comments, boycott or anything else should have no influence on the outcome of the vote by the public."

It's too early to tell if voters will cling to their stance or be swayed by economic boycotts and anti-amendment arguments over time.

Critics hope for the latter, and look to Arizona, where a diverse group of leaders lobbied residents for years to overturn a ban on a state holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Over five years, the city lost millions of dollars of convention business and a shot at hosting the 1993 Super Bowl. This year, after two earlier attempts, voters finally opted to get rid of it.

"We had the benefit of saying, 'Look, this is not going to go away' " said Tony Alba, a Phoenix convention and tourism official involved in the lobbying effort. "Colorado can't say that right now. . . ."

It's unlikely a majority of Colorado residents would ever switch their votes on Amendment 2 — despite a boycott, said Colorado College economist Bill Weida. "Many of them are basing their vote on a theological view. That's something that usually doesn't change quickly, if ever. . . ."

Colorado Springs residents who called reinforced that point.

Like Mary Spradlin of Security, who termed the backlash a "terrible, terrible evil striking our state" and urged fellow voters not to "compromise our values for the sake of the dollar sign."

Or Gerald Bonebrake of Colorado Springs, who said simply: "I won't be blackmailed into changing my mind at any time."

Smiley N. Pool/Gazette Telegraph

Patricia Hewitt, hiding her identity with a paper bag, is hugged after declaring her homosexuality at a Ground Zero meeting Thursday. The group hopes to shift an Amendment 2 boycott to Colorado Springs.

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AMENDMENT 2: THE BACKLASH

AFTER THE VOTE

■ **Nov. 3:** Colorado voters approve Amendment 2 with 53 percent of the vote — 66 percent in El Paso County.

■ **Nov. 4:** Amendment 2 critics hold candlelight vigils and protests. A coalition of state and national leaders unveil plans for a constitutional challenge of Amendment 2. And talk of a boycott begins when a Los Angeles group, Coloradans & Californians for Fairness in the Nation, asks artists, entertainers and tourists to stay away from Colorado.

■ **Nov. 12:** A lawsuit filed on behalf of seven gay and lesbian Colorado residents (and one heterosexual man with AIDS) challenges the constitutionality of Amendment 2. Plaintiffs also included Denver, Boulder and Aspen, the only Colorado cities that had prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation.

■ **Nov. 18:** The debate on Amendment 2 goes prime time when singer Barbra Streisand mentions it during a speech at a televised AIDS benefit. "There are plenty of us who love the mountains and rivers of that truly beautiful state, but we must now say clearly that the moral climate there is no longer acceptable, and if we're asked to, we must refuse to play where they discriminate."

■ **Nov. 17:** Atlanta approves a resolution that bans spending city funds for travel to Colorado.

■ **Nov. 19:** Calls for a boycott grow daily, and groups begin to cancel conventions in Denver. The creators of Amendment 2, Colorado for Family Values, counter that boycotting could be a double-edged sword. "It's really too bad that some militant homosexual groups can't respect what the majority of the people voted for in this state. Based on the huge number of phone calls we have received, there are plenty of our supporters who would be happy to take their place on the slopes and in hotels," says Kevin Tebedo, Colorado for Family Values spokesman.

■ **Nov. 23:** A group called Boycott Colorado forms in Denver.

■ **Nov. 30:** Colorado Springs suffers its first financial loss from the backlash over Amendment 2 when the National Education Association cancels a 1993 convention. Separately, the Women's Sports Foundation drops the city from a list of five possible sites for a headquarters.

■ **Dec. 2:** Denver Mayor Wilington Webb urges the national television audience of the "Arsenio Hall Show" not to boycott Denver or Colorado. "As mayor of Denver, I'm going to protect the rights of gays, lesbians and everyone else."

■ **Dec. 3:** The nation's mayors say they will reconsider holding their annual convention in Colorado Springs next summer. Up to 1,500 are expected to attend the U.S. Conference of Mayors convention.

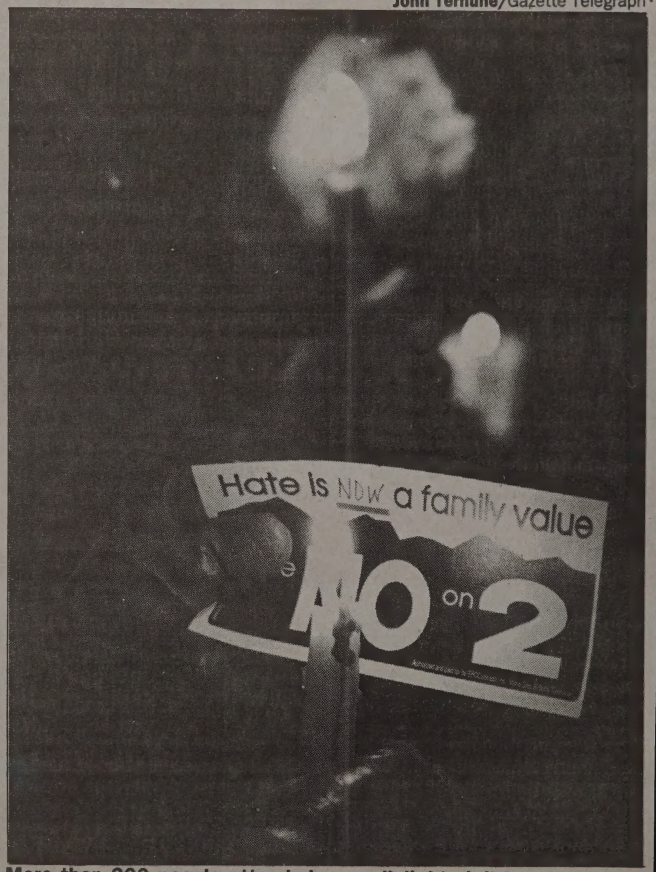
■ **Dec. 4:** The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund in Washington, D.C., issues a "travel advisory," warning that "adverse conditions" exist for homosexuals planning to visit Colorado.

■ **Dec. 7:** State House Minority Leader Sam Williams announces plans to draft legislation to overturn Amendment 2. Other lawmakers and Gov. Roy Romer quickly dismiss the plan as premature and say it will likely fail.

■ **Dec. 8:** New York City Mayor David Dinkins recommends a travel boycott of Colorado.

■ **Dec. 10:** Amendment 2 critics form Ground Zero in an attempt to shift the budding nationwide boycott of Colorado to Colorado Springs.

John Terhune/Gazette Telegraph



More than 200 people attended a candlelight vigil Nov. 4 to protest the passage of Amendment 2. Protests continue today, but backers of the measure say support is widespread.

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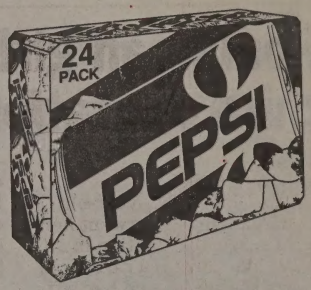

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